

The Whited Sepulchre

The Tale of Pelee

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CHAPTER IV.—(Continued.)

That instant, under the spell of soft music, Peter Constable knelt as in a dream to drink at the fountains of inspiration. The dinner call aroused him. The music ceased, and he was again the faltering human lover. The path had been illumined only long enough to show him that there was a shorter way.

It seemed during dinner that Lara had something to say which the presence of the others forbade. Mrs. Stansbury went upstairs. Breen and the planter engaged in a smoky discussion of the literary peregrinations of one Herman Melville. The other two set out for the gardens.

"I have wanted to tell you since morning how sorry I am," she said quietly. "I want you to know that, in spite of mother's decision, I thank you for your kindness, and believe in your deeper knowledge of our danger."

"It's good of you to say that," he answered. "I never tried to persuade anybody to do anything before. I may take Pelee too seriously, but I can't help it, with you folks here."

She laughed. "And I thought that nothing short of an actual eruption could disturb your equanimity."

"Did you ever read 'The Story of the Gadshys'?" he asked.

"Yes."

"There is a big fragment of truth back of that. Do you think I would have played upon your imagination and nerves, and made a mess of things, if I hadn't been afraid?"

"Afraid of the mountain? That's not like you. Are you about to see you down below in the city, warning the people, like Cassandra in the streets of Troy?"

"I have a dearer service—before going down into the city," he answered. "It was as if Breen and the day's contemplation had made this moment inevitable. That done, I could take up the work there with sleeves rolled up and bursting with anthems."

"What service?" she asked bravely, though the trend of his words was as black on white. She was startled, unready.

"To put you out of the range of Pelee's guns!" he said, with sudden vehemence.

She had scarcely divined that there lived a lover in this man. She felt futile beside him, and yet fused by his penetrating vitality. To her, it was the signal moment in which the woman discovers a giant besieger at her gates.

"They will hear you!" she found herself saying, in a self-stifled tone.

"Let them hear me. I want you to be safe. Pelee is no study to me now, but a grim warning—because you are here! I can't keep my eyes from the volcano, nor my thoughts from you. Don't you know—don't you know that you crept into the very heart of me—a bit of a girl, telling me how to live my life? Yesterday, when I found the mountain awake, all that I had ever done and thought and felt turned to nothing compared to your life. No matter what you think or say to me—I am afraid for you!"

The head bending toward her face seemed huge in the dark, and his lowered voice charged with power.

"But we will go to sea when the Panther comes," she said huskily.

"Lara!" The voice was from Mrs. Stansbury, in the upper window of the house—that calm, fateful voice.

"I must go!"

"Listen. I cannot bear to wait until the Panther comes!" he went on impetuously. "I want to put you safely ashore in Dominica this night—or Fort de France, or even on shipboard—and I will come back here. Do this for me, Lara!"

"Lara!" was called again.

"Yes, mother. . . . No, I could not go alone! There would never be a home here again. I must go to mother—oh, I cannot speak now!"

He stood alone in the dark. A lizard that had hearkened attentively, began to croak his comment to the mango trees.

CHAPTER V.

Sleeplessness ranged through Constable's brain again, and he gave the night to the old work of watching the mountain, and keeping the woman at hand. From time to time, before midnight, he heard the voice of Mrs. Stansbury. The girl was with her, but seemed to make no answer. The house was all his own. Through the lower hall to the music room; out to the veranda, the garden paths and drives; from the window that faced the north, in his own room, to the summit of the Morne d'Orange and the shadowy lawns; through ash-fog and windless moonlight—he trod the night away. The hours fell asleep in passing; the moon drowsed for ages in the cloud gardens; the stars dimmed, disappeared, and trembled forth again, as they had been. It seemed left entirely to him that time passed; he had to grapple with the minutes one by one, and fight each back to the past.

At the side of the great house to the north there was a trellis heavily burdened with lianas. Within, he found the office of an old clerk, partially covered by unfixed planking. He lifted the boards, and the moonlight shining through the foliage reflected in the water far below. A heavy wooden bar crossed the rim and was set stoutly in the masonry. Constable lit a match. His mind keenly grasped each detail. A rusty chain depended from the thick crosspiece. Slabs of stone from the side walls were scattered over the bottom of the cistern. He dropped several ignited matches into the chamber, and determined to examine the place more thoroughly by daylight. From the native cabins came the sound of a dog barking. A shutter clicked in one of the upper windows of the plantation house.

"There's no doubt about it now," he thought grimly. "They'll proceed at once to shut me up for being mentally irreclaimable."

That was a parched but brilliant dawning. The blinding charge from the east changed the dew to steam before it touch-

ed the ground. The more delicate blossoms were withered in the hectic burning when the sun was but an hour high. Lara's face was ashen and darkly lined under the eyes. The night had been an evil one to her, evil with a struggle as yet unfinished.

"Peter, you're pulling yourself down," said Uncle Joey after breakfast. "Don't take Pelee quite so seriously. Go to bed for a day, or, better still, steam the Madame out for a day's run and get some rest under the breezy awnings."

"What sort of a graven image do you think your sister's boy is, uncle?" Constable inquired. "I'll get you folks out of the war zone, or stay here until Pelee is cool—or a billion tons lighter."

"But don't you overestimate the chance of an eruption, Peter?"

"I haven't finished my mathematical calculations, my dear relative. Holy nuptials and capitals of hell—I've been all over this before. Take my word for it, and get set for a start when the mails come in to-morrow morning. You are all foolish virgins. I'm going down below to see how your city flourishes in this furnace of a day. Who is the smug authority on Les Colonies, who undertakes to tell Saint Pierre editorially that there is no danger?"

"M. Mondet is the editor."

"I should rely considerably the pleasure of caiking up the throat of M. Mondet with several sheets of his political conspiracies. I believe I shall call upon him."

"We look up to Les Colonies here, Peter. Remember this is not Montana."

"The tropics have enervated you, uncle. You need to be born again."

The hottest morning Saint Pierre had known for years! The portresses were gone from the highways. Rue Victor Hugo, the principal thoroughfare, was deserted at ten in the morning. Shop doors were closed, the street vendors silent. Volcanic ash lay in all the crevices, and mingled with the turf. Behind the shut doors children wailed. The tough little mules, some in their panniers and with no one to lead them, hugged the east walls for shade. From the byways came faintly the smell of death. In the offices of Les Colonies Constable found a breath of coolness, for the outer air was admitted as little as possible. M. Mondet welcomed the caller. Constable explained his purpose, proffered a card, and apologized for his French.

M. Mondet was a tubby little man. His hands were white, soft, tapering, ringed. If you saw them alone, you would promptly uncover, as is customary in the proximity of a woman. M. Mondet did not forget his hands.

"Pelee has a bad look, monsieur," Constable began. "I believe you could clear the city of ten thousand people if you printed a vigorous warning against the mountain; if you ordered the natives to take no chances, but to flee, regardless of their coats, chickens, coals, coins, or their best city fathers. To be instrumental in saving the lives of ten thousand people is not a service given to all men, monsieur."

Constable spoke slowly, and was angered by the reply of the editor:

"But, my dear M. Constable, there is no danger—no danger, I assure you!"

"Sir, this is tragedy—black, rumbling, naked tragedy! I say there is need for a giant here, who would paint the possibilities of that monster in living fire. A man might die in the foulest gutter, cursed by the demons of drink and disease, but with a chant on his lips and 'vive leaves in his hair,' if the memory of such a service as may be yours were with him at the last!"

The French editor found himself looking into a lean, tanned face that flushed and paled in turn. Moreover, he was uneasy on account of a pair of lean, tanned hands which lay lightly and restlessly upon the knees of the man before him. These hands seemed to be the potent embodiments of hate and swiftness. The manner of their low leaping created the impression that their leashes were insecure, and the immaculate cravat of M. Mondet felt tight upon his throbbing throat.

"Perhaps it is well that you called," he said with haste, leading out his caller with the delicacy bred of the fear of dynamite.

Constable left, unsatisfied. The clock in the Hospital Militaire struck the hour of eleven. Constable slowly made his way to the water front and back to the Sugar Landing. His launch was still waiting there at the stone pier. He had sent out word to Captain Negley for steam to be kept up night and day. A small crowd was gathering on the shore, slightly to the north of the Sugar Landing. Constable hurried thither. A black woman had fallen, from the sun. Her burdens lay together on the burning sand—a tray of cakes from her head, a naked babe from her arms. Constable had the stricken creature placed in the launch and taken out to his ship for care, sending a native doctor after her. The negroes regarded him with curious adulation. The water front would know him when he came again.

"Oh, I say, friends of mine," he announced in French, "if any of you have sick wives or little ones, send them out to the ship yonder, and they will be cared for. No, it is not a hospital, where fees are charged—just a temporary refuge from the heat for the women and little ones. Tell your neighbors. Here is money to hire boats. I can crowd two hundred babes and mothers on board."

The thought of a breath of coolness turned his steps to Pere Rabaut's little stone shop in the Rue de Rivoli. Light-headed from the heat, and the root of each hair prickling its individual warning, he ascended the terraces and sank down in the darkness at last, in his old seat under the round window. The shop was quite deserted. Moments passed, as he fanned himself with his limp straw hat. A large piece of cardboard lay upon the table. He turned it over idly. A pencil sketch adorned the side which had

lain against the wood. The realization was instantaneous that no common hand had wrought this work.

The figure was that of a grown girl—Sonia—and the attitude of expectancy brought out queerly the graceful and ardent lines of her figure. A wreath of blossoms was entwined in her hair, and an old French urn hung from her hand. The sketch seemed to be a series of happy after-thoughts, with not a line too much. As he studied it, with interest and curiosity, Constable became conscious of low voices in the court behind. He arose, with no idea of stealth, and stepped to the rear door.

Sonia and Hayden Breen were standing close together in the denser shade at the far end of the court. The song birds were stilled in the torrid noon. The girl's profile, a bewitching thing wrought of animated gold, was upturned to the eyes of Breen, and she was listening with soulful intent. Shy Sonia, mistress of the shadows, was called from her hiding place at last to hearken unto the whisperings of an American. Her heart seemed to wait upon his words.

A smile crept over the face of the watcher. His feelings were strange indeed. There was a nobility in the figure of Breen, standing there among the huge banana leaves! The watcher withdrew. The sketch upon the table reminded him that Sonia had revived the art, long-buried. Perhaps the vivid maiden had revived as well the lost youth of the world-jaded one. Constable departed.

The sky had become overcast. Pelee's cone was not visible from the streets. A sharp detonation cleaved the darkening air, and from the shut houses the answer issued, an answer partly stifled, but vibrant with fright—the quivering cries of age and childhood, sharp, low screams from the mothers, the sullen undertones of men. A subdued drumming came from the north now, completing the tossing currents of sound in the streets. All this was rubbed out instantaneously by a series of thunder crashes. A deluge of ash complicated the shroud of noonday, and the curse of sulphur pressed down. The highways filled magically with a crying, crouching, gray-lipped throng.

The American was running through the burned, poisoned air. A woman stretched out her hands to him as he passed. A mulatto youth fell in at his heels. Others followed. The white man was the sublimation of flight. Down the terraces to the Rue Victor Hugo the runners made their way, augmented as an avalanche gains weight and impetus. At the main thoroughfare, the seemingly maddened leader turned toward the Morne d'Orange, and staggered up the slope toward the plantation house.

(To be continued.)

TWICKENHAM.

Famous as the Abode of Many English Literary Giants.

The place to which the lover of English literature will sooner or later turn his steps is Twickenham. No other small town can boast of having been the residence and beloved abode of so many famous literary lights. With it are associated the immortal names of Pope, Horace Walpole, Swift, Gay, Lady Wortley Montagu, Gibson, Boswell, Johnson, Tennyson and Dickens. Surely this is enough to make any place doubly immortal! Twickenham was well nicknamed by Horace Walpole the Balaia, or Tivoli, of England; for it has truly been to London what Balaia was to ancient Rome—indeed, in a far higher degree. The big red brick house in Montpellier road where Alfred Tennyson lived for so many years of his earlier married life was the one in which many of his earlier poems were written. There his son Lionel, the second Lord Tennyson, was born, and there the author of "Idylls" entertained many of his literary friends and acquaintances. That house should surely be sacred to all lovers of English literature, which saw the dawn of "In Memoriam," which witnessed those delightful gatherings graced by Tennyson, Hallam and kindred spirits within its walls. It is to-day called "Tennyson House."—Westminster Gazette.

An Apt Comparison.

When Ab del Hakk was poor he was one day traveling across a weary plain, says the author of "Life in Morocco," and was very hungry. So he came to the house of the Widow Zaidah, who was also poor; but when he made known his want she set before him two hard-boiled eggs, all the food there was in her house.

Later, when Ab del Hakk lived in Marakesh and was very rich, Meludi, the lawyer, disliking him, persuaded the Widow Zaidah to sue him for the eggs; but not for the eggs alone, for they would have become two chickens, which in time would have multiplied that the whole fortune of Ab del Hakk would not now pay for them. When the case came to trial the rich man was not in court.

"Why is the defendant not here?" demanded the judge.

"My lord," said his attorney, "he is gone to sow boiled beans."

"Boiled beans?"

"Boiled beans, my lord."

"Is he mad?"

"He is very wise, my lord."

"Thou mockest!"

"Surely, my lord, if hard-boiled eggs can be hatched, boiled beans will grow."

The suit was promptly dismissed, with costs to the plaintiff.

A Casual Blunder.

Doctor—Yes, madam, your two sons are getting on very nicely. The elder stood the operation for the removal of the appendix exceedingly well.

Mother—Oh, good gracious, doctor! That's the wrong one. He's the mealy one. It's the other one that has appendicitis.—Baltimore American.

Trousers, in their present shape, were introduced into the British army in 1813, and tolerated as a legitimate portion of evening dress in 1816.

FARMS AND FARMERS



Destroying Weeds.

In destroying annual weeds one method is to disk the stubble fields, causing the weed seed to germinate, after which they can be killed by subsequent cultivation or by frost. Another method is to turn live stock, especially sheep into these stubble fields to eat up the weeds and weed seeds. The value of cultivated crops, rotations and summer fallows is also discussed.

The eradication of perennials is more difficult than in the case of annuals. For these they tried another crop, bare fallow, chemicals and tar paper. For small areas of quack grass, covering with tar paper was found effective, but was too costly for field application. As quack grass is similar to Bermuda grass in its habit of spreading, and it equally persistent, this method may be of interest to those who wish to kill small areas of Bermuda.

A Help in Fruit Picking.

In commercial orcharding it is generally most economical to have picking and packing work going on concurrently. This saves putting the apples on the ground and having to handle them again. A portable sorting table upon which pickers can empty their bags is placed on low truck wheels and a single horse can move it to any desired point as the work proceeds. It should be made large enough to hold not less than two barrels of fruit.

The rear bolster is higher than that at the open end, so that the culls can be rolled out. A long, heavy plank is placed on the ground on each side of this table on which the barrels are set for filling. The culls are allowed to roll into a pile from the lower end of the grading table.

The Horse's Teeth at Nine Years.

At nine years the mark in the corner teeth of the upper jaw is clearly defined; the mark is still visible in the middle teeth, but has almost disappeared from the nippers.

Get After the Fly.

Flies are one of the most aggravating pests we have on the farm. If we give them a breathing spell the poor cows, calves and horses have to suffer and the supply of milk will run short. It is either "fight or lose." It is not sufficient to just spray the animals with a fly-repelling mixture in the morning and then turn them out to pasture.

A few hours later, when I go to look after them in the pasture, they are often covered with blood-sucking flies again, so I take a hand-sprayer loaded with a liquid of which kerosene forms a large portion along and spray this right upon the flies on each animal.

The cows soon learn that spraying means relief and they will hold still while you spray. The flies quickly let go of their hold and fall to the ground when the kerosene touches them. Visiting the animals once or twice a day in this manner is a great help to them during the fly season.—L. R. Johnson, Illinois.

Guide for Drag Saws.

A very simple method by which one man can manipulate a drag saw to cut down trees has been devised by a Western timber man. In using these saws two men have heretofore been necessary, one at each end of the saw. The arrangement of the drag-saw guide is shown in the illustration.

Resting against the tree is a rod, from which is suspended a cord. At the end of the cord is an adjustable clamp, to which one end of the saw is secured. At the other end of the saw is a handle. In operating the saw to cut the tree, the end opposite the handle is supported by the cord in the same position as if operated by hand. With the employment of this guide the necessity of an extra man to manage one end of the saw is eliminated.

Farming on Arid Land.

Successful farming on arid land without artificial watering has been brought to the notice of the Agricultural Society of Germany, with an explanation of the method. In Syria and Palestine, with practically no rain from April to October, the fields in July have a flourishing abundance of watermelons, cucumbers, tomatoes and other products, and plants continue green and thriving until autumn. The secret lies in so plowing that the winter rains are absorbed and retained in the subsoil. The plowing is shallow, averaging only 4 to 6 inches in depth, and after the full harvest it follows each heavy rain as soon as the ground begins to dry, the purpose being to keep a loose and friable surface to take up the water from the subsoil. In the spring the land is plowed to a depth of about 6 inches. The seed is dropped by the plow upon the moist subsoil and it is covered by the closing up of the loose soil. Protected by the loose covering, the subsoil furnishes sufficient moisture for plant growth during the entire dry season.

ONE ROOM FLATS.

A Novelty from the West Designed to Save Space.

The one-room flat is a real estate novelty from the West. This so-called one-room flat, by means of specially built furniture, makes its one room serve for the purposes that usually take several. Several Western cities are provided with these apartment houses, some of them sheltering as many as twenty-eight families. Some of them are called "residence hotels," and offer tenants the choice of taking their meals in the public dining room or using the domestic facilities attached to their own room.

Of course, the flat has in reality more than one room. There is an entrance hall, a bathroom and a narrow apartment adjoining the main room, which serves for the operation of the furniture, which swings on a pivot. The plan of these flats shows one large room, with a kitchenette, a bathroom, and this curious room about three feet deep, running parallel with the main living room. One end of this serves to supply the closet room, while the other provides the space for the furniture to swing about in.

When the one-room flat is serving as a drawing room, there is a small center table visible, a combination desk and bookcase, and a sideboard which stands in its place, whether the room is to be used as a sitting or dining room. It is only at dinner time that the sideboard turns around, and on the other side of the board partition back of it there swings into view a brass bed. This is folded up against the board, but it is so arranged that the bedclothes attached to hooks in the head of the bed are allowed to swing free and are aired all day.

The library table, merely by swinging its edge around, doubles its size and is capable of seating four persons. When bedtime is at hand the bookcase, which stands next the sideboard, also does its turn, and in its place there appears a dressing table. Of course, the same chairs must serve, and they must be selected with appropriateness for the varied uses of the room.

The great merit, claimed for these one-room flats is the saving of space, the freedom from the greater care of housekeeping and the possibility of housing so many families in one building. Of course, the patented furniture made for them is the indispensable element of the scheme, and without it such dwelling places would not be possible. So it is naturally the company that manufactures the furniture which is putting up the houses, selling stock in them and otherwise promoting them as they would any other building project. In not every case is the house supplied with a hotel dining room, in some there are only the small kitchens.

Few of the persons who live in these one-room flats are fortunate enough to possess servants, nor do they feel the need of them. It is, of course, necessary to put up the houses on sites which allow light to every room, as a one-room flat cannot depend for its light and air on other rooms.

Origin of "Sunday."

Many queries with regard to the origin of the word "Sunday" have been made, and a considerable number of theories about it have been explored. The most popular one seems rather prosaic. Its locale is reported to have been New Orleans, where a progressive but unlucky soda water dispenser found himself one bright and starry Sunday afternoon entirely out of stock with carbonated water, with no chance to renew his supply. There was a constant demand for his services, and after repeatedly answering the embarrassing question why he was unable to produce the drinks, in desperation he hurriedly mixed ice cream and fruit sirup into a frozen concoction which greatly delighted his customers. During the following week days he had so many orders for "that Sunday recipe" that the dispenser dashed over him that it would be a good thing to put it regularly on his bill of fare.

A well meaning but uneducated clerk, who prepared the menu, did the trick of transforming "Sunday" into "Sundae," and the palate trickler remained "Sundae" ever since.

No affidavit goes with this story, but it is recounted by one of the oldest soda water salesmen in the business, and it seems reasonable.

Getting a Good Ready.

The Governor of Southland—What is in the afternoon, Dickerson?
The Secretary—Mr. Monk, sir.
The Governor—What! What do you want?
"Why, he's chairman, sir, of the central African Roosevelt committee reception, sir. He wants a phone station set up in the jungle, sir."—Chicago Land Plain Dealer.

Poor Old Sol!

An astronomer says that an enormous dark planet is rushing toward the sun and that the impact, which is to take place in a few thousand years, will be frightful. Great Caesar!—that's the case, Old Sol stands a good chance of having the sports knocked out of him.—Morristown Times.

An Enthusiast.

Towne—Oh, yes, he's quite an enthusiast. He goes in for things in earnest.
Browne—Yes, if some one were to send him on a wild goose chase he'd speak of himself afterward as a sportsman.—Philadelphia Press.

Some one asks why babies cry.

Some one asks why babies cry. It happens it is because they don't know how to swear.